

Hieronymus Bosch.

There is very not very much known about Hieronymus Bosch. The few documents there is indicate that Bosch, like his father and grandfather, was a Roman Catholic artist and lived in Hertogenbosch, a town In the Netherlands. Bosch lived there his whole life and married a local woman and then he joined a religious brotherhood of Mary and for the rest of his life took active part in the affairs of the Confraternity of Our Body had the responsibility of designing stained glass windows and other similar jobs for the church. He was known outside Hertogenbosch for his work, when he was still alive.

Bosch's paintings express an interest in many things. Here are a few: *astrology-people doing things on the study of the moon, planets and stars.

*Folklore-traditional beliefs and stories of people, e.g. the Saints- St. Anthony *Witchcraft *Alchemy Bosch's pictures show Gods eternal doom of souls.

Of the 40 paintings attributed to Bosch, seven are signed but none dated. Bosch early dealt with traditional subjects in rough, clumsy works such as the 'Crucifixion'. Later he painted three-paneled paintings, which provided glimpses in to a hellish chaos. Examples of the as 'The Temptation of St. Anthony' and 'The Garden Of Earthly Delights'.

In his later works, he changed drastically, painting crowded ~~Boopsiofmbatffamogshf0ighriss~~ great altarpieces: The Hay Wain, The Temptations of Saint Anthony, and The Garden of Delights in Madrid; The Temptations of Saint Anthony in Lisbon; and The Last Judgment in Vienna. However, on this site some of his less well-known pieces are presented.

'The Garden Of Earthly Delights'

This painting composes of three panels. In the left panel, you could see the story of Adam and Eve. God is just about to hand Eve to Adam and things are looking

bad already. Just behind Adam is a tree and in it, you could see the serpent. The story the progress from Adam and Eve and the original sin to the torments of Hell, a dark, icy, yet fiery nightmarish vision, on the right.

The Garden of Delights in the center illustrates a world deeply in sinful pleasures. The center panel, The Garden of Delights, is a very clustered in places and then there are areas that are slightly empty. This panel is filled with cavorting nudes and giant birds and fruit. When you look at this panel initially, people seem to be enjoying themselves as if they are at a festival and everybody looks peaceful. Towards the top you could see fire has been set on buildings and below these buildings, instead of Satan, is a monster who has a broken egg shell for a body, tree trunks as legs and the trunks end in boats, so the boats must be its feet. Its face is under a plate/flat hat with a bagpipe on top of it. The face of the monster is looking gloomy/ sad, unhappy to be there. Below the monster are people being tortured, most of the instruments of torture are musical instruments. Towards the bottom, a bird like creature is sitting and swallowing a man. As this creature swallows the people they are digested, then they fall down into a hole in the ground. It is possible that the hole itself is Hell and the rest of the painting could be an area where souls are judged and the ultimate punishment is being eaten by the bird like creature. Or it could be that people are getting eaten by this bird like creature because they have eaten meat in their past life? Alternatively, it could be that musical instruments are used to torture the people for the type of music they listened to?

'The Temptation of St. Anthony'

Bosch's spiritual heroes were the saints who endured both physical and mental torment, yet remained steadfast. Among the saints, Bosch's favorite was Saint Anthony, the subject of his triptych The Temptation of Saint Anthony, which features physical punishment on the left wing, a Black Mass in the

center, and the blandishments of food and sex on the right wing.

In Bosch's day, temptation not only had the meaning it has today, but also meant physical/mental assault by demons. So St Anthony is not only tempted by the pleasures of the flesh and so on, he is also beaten up and terrorized by the demons.

The viewer does not have a clear focus. St. Anthony is situated obviously and directly in the middle of the central panel but too much action and fantastic creatures surround the Saint. There are three elements aiding the attention to St. Anthony, though none very successful. The first is the grouping of four men crossing the bridge in the foreground on the left side panel. The group heads toward the central panel on a diagonal pointing directly at St. Anthony. The central panel of this triptych illustrates the kneeling figure of St Anthony being tormented by devils. These include a man with a thistle for a head, and a fish that is half gondola. Bizarre and singular as such images seem to us, many would have been familiar to Bosch's contemporaries because they relate to Flemish proverbs and religious terminology. What is so extraordinary is that these imaginary creatures are painted with utter conviction, as though they truly existed. He has invested each bizarre or outlandish creation with the same obvious realism as the naturalistic animal and human elements. His nightmarish images seem to possess an inexplicable surrealistic power.

The central symbol of this triptych is A Black Mass. The high priestess administers communion to crawling and stumbling ruffians making their way towards the goblet of wine. The headdresses of intertwined snakes and thorns likewise add to this travesty of Holy Communion. In the far background, a monastery burns vividly against the dark sky. What is the significance of this? What is Bosch saying by depicting only winged demonic creatures trying to save the monastery? People go on with their daily tasks of washing their clothes and such as this monastery burns to the ground by their side. Why don't the people try to save the monastery? Could this be a subtle message of inevitable change within the church? Did the people

set fire to the monastery? Several conclusions can be drawn from these symbols.

On the right side panel the largest figure in the foreground, which is a cloaked and bearded figure similar in appearance to St. Anthony, is seated with head turned slightly towards the viewer. More importantly, this figure is aided with the light-colored rock he sits upon, composing a diagonal again towards the St. Anthony in the central panel.

This space around St. Anthony is in fact the only free-open space. Everywhere else the landscape breaks and rolls, creatures come and go, fires rage and winged creature fill the air. Even if all of Bosch's symbols could be understood today, they seem to bleed into one another, sharing the complicated and crowded spaces.

Bosch's symbolism and ideas float further and further away as the time period stretches between his life and the present.

'The Last Judgment'

Bosch showed that the traditions and achievements of painting which had been developed to represent reality most realistically could be turned round, as it were, to give us an equally believable picture of things no human eye had seen.

He became famous for his terrifying representations of the powers of evil. On the left we watch evil invading the world.

The right wing is a designed and conventionalized version of the "Paradise" of the Garden of Delights, in which Christ is holding Eve's wrist but Adam is half-asleep (Adam's predictable state during the Creation of Eve). The creation of Eve is followed by the temptation of Adam and both are driven out of Paradise, while high above in the sky we see the fall of the rebellious angels, who are hurled from heaven as a group of disgusting insects.

On the other wing we are shown a vision of hell. There we see horror piled on top of horror, fires and torments and all way of fearful demons, half animal, half human or half machine, who plague and punish the poor sinful souls for all eternity. For the first and perhaps for the only time, an artist had succeeded in giving concrete and actual shape to the fears that had haunted the minds of man in the Middle Ages. It was an achievement that was perhaps only possible at this very moment, when the old ideas were still vigorous and yet the modern spirit had provided the artist with methods of representing what he saw.

On Thin Ice

This is taken from the bottom left corner of the right panel. The bird is a clear reference to sloth-a deadly sin-as it finds skating easier than flying. Run through its beak is a paper with the single word meaning 'idler'.

The Devil has All The Best Tunes

The devil has all the best tunes.

A booted bird metamorphoses into a musical instrument.

Bosch's ideas float further was as the time period increases between his lifetime and the present. As time passes his symbols and ideas become harder to make out and his ideas become harder to take hold of because there is simply no way to join.

The Fountain of Life

The creation of the earth is complete, and real and fantastic creatures now inhabit the Garden of Eden.

The fountain of life-part crab, part gothic tabernacle-contains a reminder of the evil lurking in paradise. At its center sits an owl-a symbol of heresy and alchemy.

The Last Judgement (central panel)

This representation of the Last Judgement with its monsters walking the face of a Hell on Earth is one of the harshest of all the paintings of the judgment of the sinners. The unfortunate damned in the detail, with their paleness and almost transparent skin tones, typify Bosch's unclothed figures.

'Why Bosch Inspires Me'

Use of colour-dark background and the images being light colours-the figures in particular. Bosch's figures are very pale and lively.